

AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT

Please replace the section entitled "Abstract of the Disclosure" beginning on page 33 at line 5 with the following replacement section:

-- ~~The invention enables identification~~ Identification of starting and ending times of commercial breaks, ~~as well as starting and ending times of~~ and commercials within those commercial breaks ~~[[, to be]] found in audiovisual content is disclosed (e.g., a television broadcast) using a method having characteristics which overcome disadvantages of previous commercial detection approaches. The invention is implemented as a~~ A solution to a "batch optimization" problem is used in which commercial locations within a set of audiovisual content are detected as a group by choosing a set of commercial locations which optimizes a cost function which can include considerations of, for example, 1) one or more of many types of visual recording, audio recording and/or closed-captioned cues, 2) relative locations of commercials within the audiovisual content, and/or 3) probability models based on statistics obtained regarding characteristics of typical commercial and commercial breaks (e.g., commercial and commercial break duration, separation times of commercials and commercial breaks, likelihood of the presence of a commercial at any given time in a set of audiovisual content). Optimization can be done over the total set of commercial location decisions, rather than on a per-commercial basis. Additionally, the cost function can be iteratively evaluated, increasing the accuracy of commercial location decisions produced by the method. Additionally, and many more types of cues and combinations of cues can be used in detection of commercials in accordance with the invention than have been used in other approaches to commercial detection. --